

# Heritage News

**Heritage News** is the newsletter of the YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION. It is published five times a year: September, November, January, March and May; and distributed, free of charge, to the membership by mail, and made available to the public at City Hall, Farmers' Market, and various business locations in the three business districts in the City.

JANUARY 1989

YPSILANTI, MI

- MEETING:** Tuesday, January 24, 1989 - 7:30 pm
- LOCATION:** Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce  
125 North Huron, corner of Washtenaw
- SPEAKER:** THOMAS BRUNK, Curator and Archivist of  
Pewabic Pottery
- PROGRAM:** THE STORY OF PEWABIC POTTERY: Detroit's Unique  
Contribution to the World of Art

We are pleased to have engaged Mr. Thomas Brunk, who perhaps knows more than anyone else about the subject of Pewabic Pottery and the history of that unique establishment in Detroit. Most of us know a little about the subject, have some sense of what Pewabic looks like, particularly in tiles; but for many it is still a mysterious name. We all need to learn more about this significant and fascinating art form so close to home.

Mr. Brunk is eminently qualified to teach us, with words and slides - and to delight us! He has studied art history at the University of Paris and archival administration at Wayne State. He has taught architectural history at the University of Detroit School of Architecture, is president of Indian Village Historical Collections, and Curator and Archivist of Pewabic Pottery. He has completed a book on one of Detroit's distinguished architects, entitled Leonard B. Willeke, AIA: Excellence in Architecture and Design. He has also published articles on other architects, including William Stratton and Charles Freer, and on Pewabic Pottery.

**DON'T MISS THIS SPECIAL EVENING!!!**

**NOTICE THAT WE HAVE A WONDERFUL NEW MEETING PLACE: THE CONFERENCE ROOM UPSTAIRS, AT THE CHAMBER. PARK IN THE BIG VACANT SPACE ON HURON ACROSS FROM ST. LUKE'S CHURCH, COME IN THE SOUTH SIDE DOOR AT THE CHAMBER AND UP THE STAIRS.**

**COFFEE HAS BEEN ARRANGED FOR WITH THE CHAMBER STAFF AND OUR REFRESHMENTS COMMITTEE WILL BRING THE SWEETS.**

**GUESTS ARE WELCOME!!!**

## MORE ABOUT PEWABIC POTTERY...

Pewabic Pottery, a nationally renowned ceramic learning center, museum, gallery and producer of hand-crafted architectural tile and pottery, was founded in 1903 by Mary Chase Perry. The current Pottery, built in 1906-07, was designed by William Stratton, whom Perry married in 1918. Financial backing came from Horace and Minnie Peck Caulkins. Mr. Caulkins, a pioneer in high-heat kilns, together with Perry, adapted these kilns to ceramics. She developed rare, unusual and iridescent glazes, and earned a national reputation over the next half century for art pottery and architectural installations. The work may be seen in such places as Christ Church, Cranbrook; the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, DC; the Nebraska State Capitol; the Science Building at Rice University; Houston; Detroit's Guardian Building, Public Library, Holy Redeemer Church, Institute of Art, St. Paul's Cathedral, Belle Isle Scott Fountain, and countless homes, churches and institutions. Pewabic art pottery is in many museums and private collections, most notably the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Freer Gallery of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington.



*Pewabic Pottery*

Mrs. Stratton established the Ceramics Departments at Wayne State and the University of Michigan and received honorary degrees from both. In 1947, she received the nation's highest ceramics award, the Charles Binns Medal. She died in 1961 at the age of 94.

Henry Caulkins deeded the Pottery to Michigan State University in 1966, and the University operated Pewabic as an educational facility until 1981, when it transferred ownership to the private, non-profit Pewabic Society, Inc.

Under the stewardship of the Pewabic Society the historic building has been renovated and its programs expanded: ceramics classes, historic and contemporary exhibits, and artists' residencies. The Pewabic Society has revived the making of architectural tile, dormant for more than two decades. WDIV-TV commissioned the first installation of this new era in 1982-83. Four major public art works for the Downtown Detroit People Mover were installed in 1986-87. A new generation of public places, building and homes is now able to commission hand-crafted Pewabic tile and pottery.

## WATER TOWER FINALLY LISTED!

The Foundation recently received a letter announcing that "The Michigan Historical Commission is pleased to inform you that the Ypsilanti Water Works Stand Pipe, Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County, has been listed in the State Register of Historic Places." The letter, written by Martha M. Bigelow, Director of the Bureau of History and Executive Secretary of the Michigan Historical Commission, continues with an extensive description of the architecture and history of the tower. The Foundation will file this document under "Water Tower" for those who want further details.

**ADDED HISTORY:** We may note that in the EMU Aurora, 1894, is the following description of this great monument: "...towering 150 feet high is the stand pipe, in which is a huge reservoir, containing the water supply of the city. The water is obtained from a flowing well in the valley near the river, and is forced to the reservoir by steam power. Chemical analysis has shown that its purity is equalled by few and excelled by no other water supply in the United States. The whole system is very efficient."

## WELCH HALL 11 YEARS LATER ...

Eleven years ago, January 5, 1978, your editor sent a letter to James Brickley, then President of EMU, concerning Welch Hall. It was simply an outline, stressing the importance of the building to the University and the community and suggesting a way it might be brought back into productive use. The following is a reprint:

To: President Brickley  
From: Jack Harris  
Re: Welch Hall

1. Concerned about the ECHO report (mid-Fall) and rumors that the administration is considering the possibility of demolishing Welch Hall.
2. Feel a duty to convey not only my own thoughts on the subject, but what I have heard from campus sources, community people, and others.

In talking with Vice-President Smith about my "5 Buildings: Ypsilanti" grant project, I set before him some of the following thoughts about Welch Hall. He urged me to see you.

- a.) Welch Hall is our only state-funded building which survives from the nineteenth century (1896). Sherzer is 1903. Starkweather came as a gift. Welch, then, is a most important building for us historically.
- b.) Architecturally, it is our 'front', our face to the world, facing as it does Cross Street and Washtenaw Avenue and the historic water tower. It presents an excellent classical nineteenth century facade to the public. The details of the front are exceptionally fine. (I have color slides that show details.)
- c.) Economically it may be a problem at this point - I don't know; I would like to have more information about this. As for heat loss, it seems to register about equal to Pray-Harrold on the infra-red map in City Hall - and it is far better in terms of heat loss than many other campus buildings, including Roosevelt.
- d.) The architect's specifications sheet (40+ pp.) (in the archives of our library) indicates the finest materials went into the building. The solid appearance of the structure gives evidence of such durability.
- e.) Most important: Welch serves as the crucial side of a large space, a University Square, so to speak, made up of Sherzer, Ford, McKenny and Welch - with our National Trust Starkweather in the center. This large square, beautifully designed, and now become a focal meeting place for students in good weather, would be destroyed if Welch were removed. This quiet and beautiful enclosed space would be exchanged for the roar of traffic along Cross and Washtenaw. The effect would be an enormous shock; the loss devastating.
- f.) Welch could easily be on the National Register of Historic Places. This means that there would be the ever-increasing possibility of government funds for restoration and/or recycling of the building. Moreover, to tear it down would no doubt make it difficult if not impossible to get funds for recycling of lesser buildings on the campus. This year Columbus, Ohio, lost a \$6,000,000 grant that it had been awarded by the government when the city - after the fact - bulldozed an historic structure in the proposed revitalization area. On the other hand, there is an increasing amount of evidence of the financial benefits of restoration/recycling.
- g.) The effect on public relations of demolishing Welch Hall would be totally negative. First, the town would be deeply concerned. There are a great many people here who attended the Normal School. Secondly, the effect of demolition on alumni relations would, I fear, be seriously detrimental. To lose Welch Hall would be a minus for students, staff, administration and the community.

(continued ...)

My personal suggestions for alternatives to demolition:

- I. Appoint a committee to explore the feasibility of recycling Welch Hall - a committee made up of administration, faculty, students, and townspeople (including possibly an architect). This sort of committee, on a larger scale, has been appointed by the President of Wayne State.
- II. Urge its designation as an historic site. Place it on the National Register and work on getting funds for a larger feasibility study and possible future funds for restoration/recycling.
- III. Consider the possibility of restoring the exterior to its original glory. It's all there except the balustrade over the front porch.
- IV. Convert the interior into a totally redesigned space for use mainly as executive offices. (Tear out all the tack work that is now there, restore the ceilings to make use of the wonderful windows; the tops of which are now blocked out.) In other words, make it into a showcase of executive offices. The location - near the Union and Starkweather Center - is perfect.
- V. If the executive offices could be housed on the second floor, where the best architectural features are, convert the ground floor into a much needed art gallery for the University. We are known in Ann Arbor and Detroit for our creative art department; give it a showcase, place it up front.
- VI. Every stage of such a progress should be used to the University's advantage in terms of public relations; such a development could serve our image from beginning to end.
- VII. Meanwhile, convert Pierce Hall - which looks like prison on the outside and a grade school in the halls - into a student services building entirely.

I HEREBY PLEDGE MY SERVICES TO THE CAUSE OF REVITALIZING WELCH HALL AND THE CAMPUS. I ASSURE YOU THERE ARE OTHERS WHO WOULD BE GLAD TO SERVE AS WELL.

Sincerely,

Jack Harris

NOTE; January 1989: Even as we reprint Jack's letter, Welch Hall is under restoration and will house the University's executive offices. Pierce Hall is being expanded to house all student services (registration, records, financial aid, etc.) Jack's efforts, over so many years, Denis Schmiedeke's major proposal for the adaptive reuse of Welch, the efforts of Preservation Eastern, and the often expressed concern of so many others have all contributed to this splendid outcome. All of us can breathe a big sigh of relief. The saving of Welsh Hall is a MAJOR contribution to the preservation of the heritage of the University and this community.



## ANOTHER IMPORTANT ADDITION TO DOWNTOWN!

Just as the EMU Business School rises from the dust at the corner of Michigan and Hamilton in downtown Ypsilanti, word comes of another development, perhaps smaller, but the visual impact will also be great. Catherine McAuley Health Center has announced that it will build the Oscar Haab Health Building on the long vacant land on Huron Street between Pearl and Washtenaw. Oscar Haab has donated the property to McAuley and they will use it to build "an array of doctors' offices with some diagnostic services and extended hours," as the local Press reports. The one historic structure on the property, recently the victim of fire, will perhaps be incorporated into the new structure. A 90-100 car parking lot is also planned. This poses an exciting challenge to the architects and the Historic District Commission, which will need to review all plans. It will be a joy to see that ugly vacant space become an integral and vital part of our most historic and architecturally important street!

## FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS BRINGS WARMTH

The Festival of Lights, which has become a fixture of Christmas time in Ypsilanti, has had another highly successful year, with 150,000 visitors. Perhaps all those who participated in the work best know the impact of this important event: just watching the faces of those who passed through Riverside Park told them how much such a display was appreciated. But perhaps one name stands out a bit as an expression of what this project means to Ypsilanti, especially in terms of volunteerism: Billie Zolkowsky, Curator at the Historical Museum, who, on many nights, dressed up in her best clown costume, stood out there in the cold at the end of the trail and handed out candy to the kids in the cars as they came through. Her spirit, as shown on those occasions, perhaps best exemplifies the New Spirit of Old Ypsilanti, the kind of dedication that has made this a very pleasant place in which to live.

## SCHOOLHOUSE BELL TO RING!

The report is that the original bell has been found and donated to the One-Room School now ensconced at the center of EMU's campus. Rumor says it can be heard for five miles! Won't that be fun, as a reminder of our great history as the first teacher training institution west of the Alleghenies!

## WELCOME TO ...

New Members: Clayton & Caryl Eschleman  
Eric & Lisa Walters  
Terry & Mary MacDonald  
Nicholas Vlisides  
Marcia & Michael Luberto  
Ypsilanti Main Street  
Betts Chisholm  
Kevin Hurlahe

## Newcomers to Ypsilanti:

Steve & Kathy Allen  
203 N. Washington

## CENTER FOR HISTORIC HOUSES OFFERS OLD-HOUSE STARTER KIT

Old-house owners, especially those who have just purchased an historic house or are about to start a renovation project, can now find help in the "Old-House Starter Kit", available from the Center for Historic Houses of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Kit includes maintenance hints, information sources helpful to the homeowner, bibliographies, and preservation contacts specific for the purchaser's state. It also answers common questions asked by homeowners, such as "How do I get my house listed?" and "What about tax credits?"

A special bonus is a six-month complimentary membership in the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Trust members receive the award-winning magazine, Historic Preservation, and the monthly newspaper, Preservation News, samples of which are in the Kit. Members also enjoy free entrance to the National Trust's historic house museum and a discount at museum shops.

Clem Labine, former editor and publisher of the Old-House Journal, says, "The Kit is packed with solid information for old-house owners."

The Kit is available from the Center for Historic Houses, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Washington, DC, 20036. The cost is \$8.00 plus \$2.00 for postage and handling. A reduced price of \$5.00 plus \$2.00 postage is available for purchasers who are already National Trust members.

(Reprinted from Michigan Historic Preservation Network Newsletter, Nov/Dec 1988)



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March 1989

Ypsilanti, MI

**MEETING:** Tuesday, March 28, 1989 - 7:30 pm

**LOCATION:** AUBREE'S SECOND FLOOR in Depot Town  
(enter from front or back door)

**PROGRAM:** "TEN NIGHTS IN A BARROOM"  
The Role of Alcoholic Beverages in  
19th Century America

**SPEAKER:** PETER COUSINS, CURATOR  
Agriculture and Industry  
Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village

A new resident of our East Side, Peter Cousins has done considerable research on the subject of alcoholic beverages in 19th Century America. His interest in this absorbing subject peaked when he was doing research into the restoration of Eagle Tavern, formerly of Clinton, now long established at Greenfield Village. However you feel about the subject of drinking, you will surely agree that it has played an important role in the social life of America, especially in the westward movement, in the lumber camps and new towns of the frontier. Ypsilanti was no exception - and Peter hopes to include a few observations about our town. If you have your own, bring them!

Our hosts, Bill and Sandy French, are fascinated with our chosen topic for this month's meeting, needless to say! We hope that one of them will be on hand to do a five minute preface on the history of Aubree's and its days as a tavern, hostelry and restaurant in Old Depot Town.

So join us, please do. Coffee will be served, and something to munch on will be provided by the refreshment committee. Bring a friend, and come on along for a good time!

### **WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!**

Dean and Mary Rockwell

**NOTICE:** Many members have not paid dues for this year, due in September 1988. If you are not certain of your status as a dues paying member, please call either treasurer Betty Randazzo (481-6144) or president Jack Harris (485-2155), both of whom have an updated list of members.

### **ERRATUM, AND APOLOGIES ...**

It has been brought to the attention of your editor that he erred in the January NEWS concerning the Museum staff title of Billie Zolkowsky, whom he was commending for her dedication to the Festival of Lights project. The staff listing, with correct titles, is as follows:

Museum Director & Curator:  
Ann McCarthy  
Secretary & Archivist:  
Billie Zolkosky  
Historian:  
Doris Milliman

Apologies - and greetings to all our hard working and dedicated friends at the Museum!

### **AWARD WINNING PHOTO BY DENIS SCHMIEDEKE ...**

Denis Schmiedeke, Heritage Foundation Board member, has won the 1989 Louise Bethune Award for the "best photographic image of an architectural subject in the United States" in the 1989 American Institute of Architects annual photographic competition. His winning image was of the historic Shakertown Water House at Pleasant Hill, Kentucky, the 1835 structure containing the first community water distribution system west of the Allegheny Mountains. Denis won the award in competition with over 2400 other entries from around the United States. His photo will be featured on a 60 foot screen at the AIA convention in St. Louis in May, in the May issue of the AIA journal, and in the 1990 Appointment Calendar of the AIA. The award carries a \$500 cash prize which will be presented at the AIA convention.

### **31st ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON LOCAL HISTORY**

The 31st Annual Conference on Local History, "Michigan in Perspective," will be held Friday & Saturday, April 7-8, 1989, at the McGregor Conference Center on the campus of Wayne State University, Detroit. Program sessions will explore topics relating to the history and culture of Michigan and southwestern Ontario from a variety of perspectives including oral history, genealogy, folklore and ethnic history, historical preservation, the work of museums and local historical societies, and current research in the field of local history. For further information, please contact:

Philip P. Mason, Director  
Walter P. Reuther Library  
Wayne State University  
Detroit, MI 48202  
(313) 577-4024

## REQUIEM FOR SHERZER HALL

As we go to press, it's too early to tell what the decision will be concerning the fate of historic, fire-gutted Sherzer Hall on EMU's campus. An architectural consultant will be hired to evaluate whether the 1903 science building can be rebuilt or not. We hope desperately that it can. But, in any case, the University and the community have lost a much loved landmark, at least temporarily; and some of its most cherished features, such as the observatory, will surely be lost forever.

Some of its charm was well known. The great Richardsonian archway over the front entrance was perhaps the best-loved feature for photographers, especially those who wanted to show a campus with tradition. This was the back-drop on sunny fall or spring days for students who liked lounging on the grassy mound in front of that great South Front.

Less well known were elements of the interior which remained intact from its turn-of-the-century beginnings. Most notable, of course, was the observatory itself, the interior of which few of us have seen. Equally historic, however, was the set of office and classrooms on the east side of the second floor. Your editor recalls with fondness the times he would be sent to teach a Humanities Shakespeare class in the raked science lecture hall, which faced to the southeast, the original seats of which are still visible in the fire-ravaged building. Apologies would be made for sending me there, but I gave the students a different point of view: how privileged we were to be in such an historic place.

A passageway led from that great room to the old science lab with its tables, originally used for science experiments but, more recently, for art work. Between the two rooms - and up a little stairway - was the professor's office, set aloof, above, with windows looking down on the passageway between the two rooms and out over the old campus.

The person, however, who holds the most complete understanding of the building's historic character is surely Dr. Carroll Osborn, Professor Emeritus. His sensitive awareness to the historic qualities extended even to (as he told me one day) collecting original elements that were thrown into the garbage and restoring them to their rightful places. He recently showed a party of One Room Schoolhouse Committee members the pendulum shaft that dropped from the top floor to the ground floor - quite intact until the early morning of March 9. That's only one of the fascinating historic elements of this important building that Osborn can point out. We hope he will document his relationship with the building soon.

The loss of student and faculty work and materials is one thing, something that must be felt deeply by them personally, individually. But the loss of Sherzer Hall is enormous. Michigan State University campus, for example, has an entire street of such historic buildings, all seemingly well maintained (and there are others scattered around the campus); but Eastern has so few. Those of us who watched Welch decay before our eyes, fearful that fire might strike at any time, ironically didn't fully realize the danger that Sherzer was in.

One positive note remains. This kind of loss makes all of us more fully appreciative of our heritage and, hopefully, will encourage more of us to become active in the struggle to cherish and conserve what we can of our proud history.



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**MAY 1989**

**YPSILANTI, MICHIGAN**

**MEETING:** Wednesday, May 24, 1989 - 6:30 pm

**SPECIAL EVENT:** 8TH ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET  
15TH ANNUAL HISTORIC STRUCTURE MARKER AWARDS PROGRAM

**LOCATION:** LADIES' LITERARY CLUB, 218 N. Washington

It's spring again, and birds (we hope) on the wing again! When winter begins - as it does in Michigan - early in November and lasts until nearly the end of April, when finally we see daffodils, spring is indeed a time for celebration! Again, the Heritage Foundation is preparing to do exactly that: **CELEBRATE!!!** We hope you will join us for our 8th annual awards banquet and the 15th annual HISTORIC STRUCTURE MARKER awards presentations.

Don Randazzo, Chairperson, and his Marker Committee members, Bill Nickels, Jane Bird, and Denis Schmiedeke, have spent the year surveying the city, seeking out notable properties, and meeting to pool their findings. The resultant long list of buildings is then reviewed, each structure carefully considered for its historical-architectural merits and maintenance standards. Maintenance is essential if a building is to survive, and the committee considers carefully the question of continued maintenance, as well as new restorations. Now they have presented the Heritage Foundation Board of Directors with a list of seven finalists to receive awards this year. The Board's approval was unanimous, and the owners have agreed to receive markers under conditions laid down by the Foundation.

For the OWNER, then, the marker is a **BIG THANKS FOR A JOB WELL DONE**; for others, especially visitors to Ypsilanti, it says: **WE KNOW WE HAVE SOMETHING TO BE PROUD OF!**

**NOW**, don't miss this most pleasant of evenings: a spring banquet in one of Ypsilanti's most historic structures, with a variety of luscious dishes laid out on the long table in the dining room. As the guests gather, slides of Ypsilanti, past and present, will play on the screen in the background. Guests will fill their plates and gather in the front room for dinner and a short program of marker presentations.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND, MEMBER OR NOT**, and you haven't as yet been called, simply pick up the phone and call our Banquet Chairperson, Dr. Judith Williston, 483-1347, and suggest what kind of dish you might bring.

(Marker recipients are, of course, **NOT** expected to bring a dish, since they are our honored guests.

## BIRDS? NO, BUZZ SAWS!

"Harbingers of spring" we call them, don't we? Birds? No, buzz saws - or better known as chain saws. If there's one thing many Americans are known for admiring, it's a noisy machine; and, especially in the spring, the ugly racket of the chain saw often replaces the sound of bird song.

We would like to make a plea for careful, judicious use of these tools. Cutting is sometimes essential in keeping control; occasionally even ruthless cutting is necessary. But **INDISCRIMINATE** removal of trees, shrubs, limbs, and whatnot is to be rejected, especially in this ecology-conscious age. The power (dangerous power, we may add) in these tools perhaps draws some people to overdo the use of them; also the ease with which one can see a great heap of "work" accomplished represents an obvious additional attraction.

The great heaps of cuttings we have seen all over Ypsilanti this spring worry some of us. "Cleaning up the property," we may call it, but what will replace these natural elements: bare earth or, worse, concrete? Please consider this question.

Gardening takes more than a machine: it takes time, hard work, and imagination. Using a chain saw, when absolutely necessary, should be seen in context: what will replace what we remove? Will Mother Earth be better for the action? Chain saws are cutting down the rain forest, essential to the survival of life on the planet. Here, too, in Ypsilanti, we seem to be cutting recklessly. There **ARE** places where we have seen trees propped up (mostly in other civilized countries, but even in Depot Town!). Let's promote that kind of philosophy! Let's promote not only preserving historic buildings from the wrecking ball but also the green world that surrounds them from the buzz saw.

Let's make Ypsilanti beautiful, not blasted!



The Heritage Foundation would like to extend our best wishes to our new mayor, Clyde King, our new city manager, Robert Slone, and to EMU's new president, Dr. William Shelton. Incidentally, Sharon Shelton, the new first lady of EMU, has said in interview that she is "very interested in the Ypsilanti area because of the charm and flavor of its older homes. She takes a special interest in antiques and old homes. 'I always look forward to exploring new areas and what they have as far as history,' she said 'I'm really impressed by Ypsilanti and the older homes.'" Thus it seems as though we've 'lucked out' again, and that Sharon Shelton will carry on the commitment to preservation that the former first lady, Lois Porter, so avidly supported. And so an especial welcome to Sharon Shelton!

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## NEW MAIN STREET PROJECT DIRECTOR NAMED

The DDA has confirmed the appointment of Linda Young of Ann Arbor as the new Main Street project director. From Philadelphia, she has lived in Ann Arbor for 13 years, and she and her husband have bought a house there. By June, she expects to finish a master's degree in urban planning at the U. of M. and a master's degree in preservation planning from EMU. Welcome to Ypsilanti, Linda!

## "QUALITY" and THE CADILLAC FENCE CO., DETROIT

Have you ever read the short story by the English writer, John Galsworthy? Probably not, especially if you're under fifty, as he seems not to be in fashion these days. Some of us old timers, however, remember the little story of the bootmaker who, in the face of mass production, stuck to his old ways, producing boots of "quality." There's a certain sadness about the tale, for the gentle old bootmaker seems to be an anachronism; yet the point is made that quality involves integrity and dedication, and these are, it suggests, extremely rare in our time.

One is reminded of this old story when one visits The Cadillac Fence Co., in Detroit. Your editor had heard about this establishment from Al Heezen and Wanda McGlasson, who had their very special fence for their back yard built by Cadillac, the fence you may have noticed at 212 Washtenaw. I called recently and got quite specific directions, and on Saturday morning drove down into the heart of Detroit Desolation to discover the place itself. It doesn't look like much from the exterior, though there are ample examples of fencing placed about so one knows that the business exists. You have to ring the buzzer to be let in through the barred door. The salesman, a Mr. Johnson, met me there and immediately began to discuss with me the variety of fencing available, all the while educating me about the virtues of this or that kind of fencing. He's not young and was recovering from a recent knee operation and yet carried on between phone calls and my inquiries with perfect equanimity. He clearly had worked there a very long time. It was the kind of service and sensitivity to one's individual needs that is almost non-existent nowadays.

After a visit to the workshop, and I had decided pretty much what I wanted, I was turned over to the proprietor, Mr. Rontal, whose presence impressed me deeply. He too was interrupted frequently by phone calls and efforts, in fact, to search his files concerning laws about fencing in Ypsilanti. I thus had an opportunity to look around his shop, which contained not only more examples of fence, but such hardware items as hinges and latches for gates that one would have thought went out decades ago. Glancing through a doorway, I also saw what appeared to be a comfortable library, with wonderful books and a sofa: ah, I said, an educated man.

I asked him if he remembers reading "Quality". I told him of it and how his establishment reminded me of it. He smiled. "We are an anachronism," he said - and he referred to the place as "ancient." I told him I would write up his business in my next issue of Heritage News. He smiled shyly, "You'll send me a copy?" he asked. Of course I will.

If you're looking for a special fence (they have over 150 styles), and you don't know where to turn in this age of those who are so eager to assure you that they have a chain saw for every occasion, call Cadillac Fence Co., Detroit, 1-933-8755. Do it now. Quality is so rare in our world.

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### McAuley to Respect Integrity of District

The new Catherine McAuley Health Center to be built at the corner of North Huron and Pearl Streets will conform to historic district standards; and the Italianate building on the site, recently hit by fire, will be renovated. "We want to respect the integrity of the area," said John Tatum, associate in the health center's office of business development. Good news all around.

## AWARD RECIPIENTS

THE OWNERS of the following buildings will be awarded HISTORIC STRUCTURE MARKERS and will be our special GUESTS OF HONOR  
Wednesday, May 24.

DON & BILLIE WARDELL for their residence at  
211 North Huron  
Style: Federal

VINCE & SHERYL ZUELLIG for their residence at  
230 North Grove  
Style: Italianate

PAUL SIERON for his residence at  
192 Oak  
Style: Bungalow

CITY BODY SHOP (% SCOTT SOBBRY)  
20 East Cross  
Style: Italianate Commercial

TERRY & MARY MACDONALD for their residence at  
315 North Grove  
Style: Wing and Gable

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH  
123 North Adams  
Style: Classical Revival

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## SHERZER RESURRECTION IMMINENT

In our last issue we lamented the loss of Sherzer Hall on E.M.U.'s campus. Though we said we desperately hoped that the building would be restored, none of us dreamed that the good news would come so quickly. Yet it has. Roy Wilbanks, Executive Vice President, in the announcement, said: "We are very pleased that we are going to be able to preserve one of our campus treasures. . . We have a strong commitment to integrating our traditional past with the present and the future, as demonstrated by the nearly complete restoration of Welch Hall," he said.

Kathy Tinney, director of University Communications, also has said that the restoration will symbolize the integrity of the building and of EMU. The building lost the entire southwest corner to the ravages of fire, and the interior was gutted. The roof and most of the stone and brick gables fell in the holocaust. "We've already advertised for a construction manager and we hope to hire one by April 14," said Tinney. Work on the exterior could start by June.

Preservationists, at least, know that Eastern deserves national attention for such an action. We hope it comes.

Our university could now well serve as example to other universities all across the nation, a model of preserving the past to insure the future. As we present ourselves to the world, our motto might be (perhaps above an image of the great arched entry to Sherzer or the classical porch of Welch): "Our Reputation Begins Here."





### **HISTORIC LANDSCAPES COURSE at EMU**

Scott Kunst, writer, lecturer, specialist in historic landscapes, is offering "Site Visits to Historic Landscapes," Summer 1989, to include visits to MSU's diverse plantings, Fair Lane, Ann Arbor's Old West Side & Washtenaw County farmland. For more info, call EMU, 487-0407 or Scott Kunst at 995-1486



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### **BARBARA HALE DOES IT AGAIN!**

Your editor first met Barbara Hale when she was hard at work filling the window boxes at the Public Library. This was several years ago, when the boxes were first installed. Today, as I was driving up Ballard toward the university, I was taken by the sight of her raking the back yard at the little country house at 501 W. Forest. I stopped and we talked. "That's what it's all about," was her way of describing what she was doing: the owner is ill at the moment and, in lieu of participating in the ward-wide clean-up this weekend, she took upon herself (with the substantial support of her husband, Frank) the spring yard work at 501. Not only that, but she is preparing food once a week during the gentleman's convalescence, and she is also rounding up neighborhood cooperation. She is even playing housemother to the nearby fraternities and, as she told me, when they got too noisy over this graduation weekend she only needed to walk to the front of the property and they would "cool it," at least temporarily.

**KUDOS TO YOU, BARBARA,** for again pitching in; we need more of your kind of commitment to the community. **THANK YOU!**



### **DON'T FORGET: ANNUAL HISTORIC HOME TOUR:**

**DATE:** Sunday, August 20, 1989

**TIME:** Noon to 5:00 pm

**PRICE:** \$4.00 Adults  
\$3.00 Seniors  
\$2.00 Children under 12

**Guides needed - call Jane Van Bolt, 453-6525**

## HISTORIC SOUTH SIDE RUMMAGE SALE

Vickie Glassman of the Historic South Side Neighborhood Association reports that this now very active and growing organization will hold its 4th annual rummage sale, May 20, from 8:30 am until 4:30. TAKE NOTE, however, of the NEW LOCATION: 214 NORTH Huron, with convenient parking at Old Town Hall. Items will include antiques, old treasures, furniture, crafts, baked goods, toys, baby clothes and clothing. (If I forget, I'll kill myself.)

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BIG THANKS TO ALL THE VOLUNTEERS WHO HAVE BEEN  
WORKING ON THE DOCK CONSTRUCTION AT THE FREIGHT  
HOUSE!!!

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## THE GARDENING JOURNAL

The Gardening Journal is written and narrated by well-known garden writer Ruth Page, editor of National Gardening. The programs are filled with her family-tested garden techniques and humorous anecdotes about life in the garden. The Journal can be heard Monday through Friday at 10:20 am, and Saturday at 8:15 am, on WUOM, 91.7FM, Ann Arbor.

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## YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION

510 Pearl Street

Ypsilanti, MI 48197

# Heritage News

Heritage News is the newsletter of the YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION. It is published five times a year: September, November, January, March and May; and distributed, free of charge, to the membership by mail, and made available to the public at City Hall, Farmers' Market, and various business locations in the three business districts in the City

**AUGUST 1989    \*\* GOOD NEWS EDITION !!    \*\*    Ypsilanti, MI**

## **THE YPSILANTI HERITAGE FESTIVAL August 18, 19, 20**

### **SPECIAL EVENT: 12TH ANNUAL YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION HOME TOUR**

**DATE:**        Sunday, August 20, Noon to 5:00 p.m.

**TICKETS:**    Adults \$6.00 - Senior \$5.00 - Children \$4.00

Available at ticket booths in the Festival area:

1. At the entryway into Riverside Park
2. In front of the Historical Museum on Huron Street

### **HOMES ON TOUR**

110 Pearl	The Historic GAR Hall(Gary and Chris Maxton)
119 N. Huron	Jane Bird & Denis Schmiedeke
209 N. Huron	Kathy Horn & Christopher Cook
305 Maple	Mark & Nancy Powers
323 Oak	Paul & Kathy Gunderson



**SEE HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN PROGRESS: VISIT SOME OF  
YPSILANTI'S FASCINATING HISTORIC STRUCTURES !!**

%%%%%%%%%

### **IT HAPPENED IT YPSILANTI IN 1989 !!**

The Heritage Foundation presents its **ANNUAL GOOD NEWS ISSUE** telling of some of the improvements which have occurred in Ypsilanti over the past year, for our own delight and that of our Festival visitors. It also allows us an opportunity to say Thank You to at least **SOME** of those who have helped to make this a better place to live. This News issue is the Foundation's gift to all who care about Ypsilanti. We're delighted you came;

**we hope you'll come back to Ypsilanti.**

## NEW LANDMARKS DOWNTOWN

In last year's NEWS we called it "the great wasteland", and indeed it was just that - the block of downtown bordered by Michigan, Adams, Pearl, and Hamilton. All of its buildings, except one that was moved nearby to the entry of Congress, had been demolished. Now what you see is the great superstructure of the new **Gary Owen School of Business** that will be EMU's new downtown campus. The skeleton of the building looms over the west end of downtown like some enormous work in the art moderne style, with its curved bays and upswept angles. It's a far cry, surely, from the old **Cleary College of Business** that stood on the same site, but that building, too, had its towers and many angles, so perhaps we can say that history is repeating itself, with a difference. Of course, there was no need for a parking structure in those days; now what you see rising on the north side of the block is the superstructure of the new parking structure that will accompany the building.

Nearby, just north of Pearl, between Adams and Washington, the university is working with the city and the Ann Arbor Transportation to build a new bus station and parking facility that will serve not only the shuttle necessary between the main campus and downtown but the public transport, especially between Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor. Let's hope no historic buildings will be destroyed and that the presence of students will bring new life to downtown. Maintaining the historic character of downtown is essential to its appeal over the long haul.

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### YPSILANTI'S NEW MCCAULEY'S HEALTH SERVICE

Especially if you're doing the Home Tour this Sunday (and you should!), you will want to contemplate what's about to happen between the two buildings in the downtown area that will be on tour: 110 Pearl, the historic GAR Hall, and 119 N. Huron. First, Gary and Chris Maxton, who are

doing the GAR, are also restoring the adjacent building at 108. Do look now, so you can anticipate what you'll see next year!

On a much larger scale, however, note the wasteland parking area there at Pearl and N. Huron - all the way up to 119 with the exception of one nice Italianate brick house that recently survived a fire. That entire area is about to become the new **Ypsilanti McCauley Health Service** building. The Historic District Commission is working with the architects on site plans and outside treatment of the building, with an eye towards compatibility with its surroundings. McCauley is committed to renovate the Italianate rather than demolish - and have already restored the windows after a serious fire. (Oh, to see America progress without destroying its past!)



### OTHER DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENTS

Also, while you're downtown, you should look at the building on the northeast corner of the junction of Adams and Michigan. While you weren't looking that entire west wall of the two-story brick commercial building was torn down and re-built to perfection by the owner of the **Wolverine Grill** just down the street (where there has been a major face-lift, too!). In the process of taking down that west wall four splendid cast iron pillars were discovered across the front. Apparently, a fifth one is missing. Let's hope at least the corner one can be incorporated into the building facade, as in a similar building at the corner of North Main and Miller in Ann Arbor (our pillars are a little nicer, of course, but they've done a superb job of incorporating theirs into the facade).

**You might also note** in this area - just to the west of the Business School that Abe's



**Restaurant** is already going great guns, even before the arrival of the students. Now, next door, a new business called The Eastern Deli is taking shape: all good news for downtown, surely.

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**Welcome to Linda Young**, the new director of the Main Street Program that has been so important in the development of new life downtown. She reports that there is a lot of activity in proposed facade improvement yet to come. Linda will keep us posted, she says!

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Last year, too, we told you to look for improvements at 205 W. Michigan, formerly Dolly's Pub, a building now owned by **Louis Romanus**. Well, the facade has taken on a clean, fresh-painted look, without destroying the old English inn character of the ground floor. Moreover, Linda tells us that she thinks Mr. Romanus' new restaurant will be open in August - and that the new interior is impressive!

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Finally, while you're downtown don't neglect to notice the effect of the **new plantings** at the west, east, and south entries: at Adams and Michigan by the library, at the Michigan Ave. bridge, and at Ferris and Huron. The daylilies and flowering shrubs, especially, have enhanced the appearance of our downtown. At the library, too, note that the fountain still flows, thanks to support from the CBC.



## **EMU'S YEAR OF COMMITMENT TO PRESERVATION**

**THE EMU ONE ROOM SCHOOL HOUSE PROJECT** has come a long way since we reported last year that "nothing is visible for on-site inspection." The Building

is on-site and every Festival visitor genuinely interested in "Heritage" things should take the time to go look at this small but important addition to Eastern's landscape. It's located directly behind the Rackham Building and in front of Bowen Field House. (If you're on foot, just walk to the rear of Welch Hall and walk straight north.) There you will discover the restored building set in a hollow amongst a grove of trees and near a children's play yard. The foundation includes the original stone, the bell cupola has been restored, and an essential lean-to addition has been added to the back to include a unisex rest room and stairway to the new basement. The porch has been made barrier free by eliminating the steps. Work on the interior will continue when funding is available and the pressure of so many other construction projects subsides. The project is under the direction of the Dean of the School of Education, **Dr. Scott Westerman**, who has shown a deep personal interest in the project from the beginning. Eventually, it will serve the university and the community as an inspiration and a source of study of the history of education for all levels, from grade school to university. Special classes may be held in the building and it will become a proud symbol of Eastern's heritage of being the first teacher training institution west of the Alleghenies.

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**WHILE ON CAMPUS**, you must take a look at the newly restored **Welch Hall**. Over the last two years we have watched the building move from dereliction to a first class restoration, with an exciting new treatment of the interior. Welch probably never looked so good as it does today! In any case, while you're up in the area of the Water Tower, peek inside, front and/or back if you can and feast your eyes on Eastern's new symbol of pride.

**YPSILANTI'S GREAT DISASTER OF 1989**, of course, was the destruction by fire of historic **Sherzer Hall**, the old science building on EMU's campus, now the home of the art department. Most of us feared that it would be written off as a total loss (even though the great facade was partly intact); but to our amazement and delight

news came quickly that the university would restore the building to its pristine glory! Perhaps, ironically, this is the **building of the year** that we should celebrate, for it expresses the university's new commitment to preservation of its history and an awareness of how that pride in the past can serve us in the future, a sense of identity that won't be easily tossed aside. **Welch, Starkweather, and Sherzer** are a trio that represent our cultural, religious, and intellectual history: let's celebrate their preservation and restoration!

**WELCOME**, of course, to **Eastern's** new President, **William Shelton**, and his wife **Sharon**, who is said to be interested in historic preservation and community activities generally. (Does she know how much she's needed??)

#### **HISTORIC STRUCTURE MARKER AWARDS 1989**

**YOU MIGHT ALSO ENJOY DRIVING BY THESE PROPERTIES, JUST TO SEE THE CHOICES MADE THIS YEAR BY THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION IN AWARING PROPERTY OWNERS FOR THEIR MAIN-TENANCE, RESTORATION, &/OR RE-NOVATION OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES:**

**211 North Huron**  
Style: Federal  
Don & Billie Wardell

**230 North Grove**  
Style: Italianate  
Vince & Sheryl Zuellig

**192 Oak**  
Style: Bungalow  
Paul Sieron

**20 East Cross**  
Style: Italianate Commercial  
City Body Shop



**315 North Grove**  
Style: Wing and Gable  
Terry & Mary MacDonald

**123 North Adams**  
Style: Classical Revival  
Christian Science Church

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#### **HISTORIC SOUTH SIDE: THE GOOD NEWS**

**THE HISTORIC SOUTH SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**, we're pleased to tell you, has taken on new vitality. Probably much of the energy has come from the President, **Bobbi Suthard**, who recently organized the group to meet with City Council about problems. She and **Vicky Glassman** both also attended a two-day seminar in Grand Rapids on neighborhood associations, where they picked up a lot of information about problems common to all of us and, we believe, some ideas for solutions.

The HSSNA already has scheduled a **Summer Party** (Sept. 9). A street will be blocked off and pot luck served. Activities also are planned. This is a far cry from the philosophy of living that turns your back on the neighborhood. The South Side is determined to hold their own by **WORKING TOGETHER!**

**CONGRATS . . .** and keep it up! (including the excellent newsletter, headed by **John Sprentall**.)

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**WHILE ON THE SOUTH SIDE**, we'd like to have you look at one particularly historic property in that neighborhood of splendid historic specimens: **112 S. Washington**, home of **Steve and Mary Jentzen** and family. Last year we mentioned that work had begun on the great pillars of the elegant portico of that 1858 Greek Revival building. Well, take a look, folks: the place is looking scrumptious now, with the pillars restored and painted to perfection and the planting around the front setting the whole thing off. Steve tells us that he had some creative

help from his father-in-law, Judge Fink, who came up with an inventive idea in piecing the damaged pillars together. Steve also spoke with great sincerity about the "inspirational" advice he received from Foundation Board Member, Don Randazzo, who came and gave good suggestions about the project. Thanks, **Judge Fink**. Thanks, **Don Randazzo**. And thanks, the Jentzens for maintaining and restoring the character of an Ypsilanti treasure!

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Don't overlook, however, the petunia plantings at **Dick and Bobbi Suthard's**, which we believe begins the petunia parade all the way up Huron Street to Cross and perhaps beyond. "Memphis in June and Sweet Oleander" - you've heard the song; but have you smelled Ypsilanti in August and Sweet Petunias?

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### MIDTOWN NEWS

**SPEAKING OF PETUNIAS**, thanks should go to **JoAnn Geer and Maureen McMillan** for planting the corners at Pearl and Ballard. While there, do feast your eyes on JoAnn's entire display of plantings, especially those visible from Ballard. The 500 block of Pearl isn't looking too bad these days, and if you'd like to round the corner onto Perrin, you'll see more historic houses and some very pleasant gardens and yards, an old neighborhood holding its own.

---

**WHILE YOU'RE GAZING AT GARDENS, DO ENJOY BARBARA HALE'S EFFORTS** at 310 N. Hamilton. She has done it again, and better than ever! And just around the corner not far west up Cross, **HUGH SPEER** has surrounded 413 with colorful display, in contrast to some of the dismal sights not far up the street. Also note the plantings around the Marathon Station at Washtenaw and Washington; and, especially, note the "neat as a pin" plantings in front of George's Huron Inn on north Huron.

**LOOK NOW** at 207 N. Hamilton and wait until next year to see the transformation that will have taken place. **Jack Traver and Richard Reid** have just purchased that enormous landmark and they intend to convert it into several units. They are just now working with the HDC, drawing up plans. The character of such a major building in the District, of course, must be carefully protected. Considering the splendid job that Traver and Reid have done at 213 and 215 N. Hamilton, and the notable job they did on 310 N. Adams, we can expect them to a first-rate job! So, watch it happen in 89-90!

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### EAST SIDE NEWS

**APART FROM ALL THE ACTIVITY IN BUSTLING DEPOT TOWN** (The new dock on the Freight House - see Gary Urick for details, the restoration of the building known as City Body Shop, etc., etc.) a quiet transformation continues to take place on the East Side:

**LAST YEAR WE SPOKE OF SOME OF THE NEW DEVELOPMENTS** in the East Cross Street-North Grove area, but there was no sign at that time of what was about to happen at 325 E. Cross, the great towered Queen Anne now owned by **Peter Cousins**, from Greenfield Village (and speaker at the March Foundation Meeting). This 1880's gem is being lovingly restored with time, patience, persistence, and, alas, hard cash; but the results are already apparent, in the authentic paint color scheme, the gardening, and the work-in-progress.

Labor and live on, you and yours, Peter Cousins!

**WHILE ON THE EAST SIDE**, look at **Warren Lewis'** little cottage at 410 Oak, where an unbelievable transformation is taking place: a creative new interior, and a restored exterior, right up to the shingles on the roof! Warren is known and loved by many neighbors in Ypsilanti as one who can transform living spaces. He deserves thanks and encouragement galore!

**416 EAST CROSS** is another site to see (South West Corner of Cross and Prospect). The newcomers there have installed the most perfect LOW picket fence around the entire premises. A Queen Anne fence for a Queen Anne house. Welcome, newcomers!

be open for tours on Saturday, August 19, from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

**DO PLAN TO SEE AT LEAST AS MUCH AS YOU CAN OF THESE FOCAL BUILDINGS WHILE YOU ARE HERE!**

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## **TOUR OUR GREAT CHURCHES, TOO**

**WHILE WE CELEBRATE OUR HISTORY**, how can we overlook our great collection of historic churches? Especially this year, when three of the historic buildings on our Sunday 12:00-5:00 Historic Home Tour are in the the very heart of the city and surrounded by our most historic church properties, please don't miss viewing them. In fact, you might plot your map, so that you can take in as many of the churches as you can while touring the houses. Most, if not all the churches, are open at least part of Sunday afternoon. You could start, for example, with the **Christian Science Church** at 123 N. Adams, a 1924 Classic Revival building wonderfully preserved; then wander down Adams to Pearl and over to the GAR Hall; then across Huron to **St. Luke's Episcopal** (1858, with superb blue stained glass); then back across the street to 119 N. Huron and around the corner on Washtenaw to **First Methodist** and its superb art nouveau woodwork and stained glass; and up Washington to **First Presbyterian** (1857), with a wonderful rose window that shouldn't be missed; back down Huron to 209 to the elegant Tudor Revival and all its Ypsilanti history. Then if you have time before heading for the East Side through Depot Town, duck up W. Cross to **St. John's Catholic** and see the soaring Norman interior. Once on the east side, you will be viewing houses on Oak and Maple, but you could also wander down River Street toward Michigan Avenue to see the **Emmanuel Lutheran Church**. All of these great edifices will be open at least part of the Sunday afternoon that Home Tour is in progress. (Check Festival schedules for exact openings and closings.) Incidentally, you shouldn't miss **The First Congregational Church**, either: that will

**ONE CHURCH FIGURE, ESPECIALLY**, comes in for special commendation and thanks this year and that is **Rev. Father Jasper Pennington** of St. Luke's. He is the moving force behind the Friends of Highland Cemetery Association and has made great progress in organizing and planning the work of that organization. For example, a Public Lecture Series is already in progress. In July, David McMacken lectured on "The Stones are Speaking": A lecture on gravestone art in Middle America. This was followed by a gravestone rubbing demonstration. Of course, the major project of the organization right now is fund-raising in support of the restoration of the **Starkweather Memorial Chapel**, one of Ypsilanti's most precious monuments. If you wish to get involved or simply support this worthy cause, do call Father Pennington at 483-4253. You may also contact Bill Durant (483-0225), another dedicated supporter!

**WE MIGHT ADD** that the chapel was open on Memorial Day. **Mike Miller, Pat Jones, and JoAnn Geer** placed potted geraniums along the entry walk and cleaned up the interior (THANK YOU!!) And the building will be open during Festival. Check the Festival Schedule for exact times.

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## **FOUR GREAT LANDMARKS CELEBRATE CENTENARIES**

Did you know that the Eiffel Tower, that great landmark in Paris, is celebrating its 100th this year? And did you know that **Ypsilanti's Water Tower & Starkweather Chapel** are also celebrating their 100th? So, in fact, three great landmarks - **The Eiffel Tower, The Ypsilanti Water Tower, and Starkweather Memorial Chapel** - are all



celebrating 100, and two out of three are here in Ypsilanti. That's cause enough to celebrate!

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## A TIME FOR THANKS

**THANKS FOR THE FOUNDATION  
CHRISTMAS PARTY, LUANN AND  
HOWARD BOOTH. WE WILL  
REMEMBER!**

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**A GREAT BIG THANKS** to Board Members Denis Schmiedeke and Jane Bird for another one-of-a-kind calendar: The 1989 Heritage Foundation Calendar. This year's theme is "Historic Village Barns and Carriage Houses" with Denis' award-winning photography and Jane's creative script and layout. All of us recall carriage barns that have disappeared: they'll come no more. Included in the calendar are some of those that remain, reminding us of how much they contribute to the character of our community. Jane and Denis have clearly spent hours of their time on this project: let's everyone not forget to thank them for this community service. **AND BUY ARMSFUL OF THIS UNIQUE AND BEST-BUY CALENDAR FOR GIFTS - CHRISTMAS AND OTHERWISE.**

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## DETROIT FREE PRESS (July 22, 1989):

"Ypsilanti High School Singers have won top honors at the International Youth and Music Festival in Vienna . . . Competing against groups from nine nations, the 21 Ypsilanti singers on Monday won in the small choir division. On Thursday, they won the Pride of Vienna award as overall best choir after competing against groups with up to 80 members."

Someone needs to do a history of music in Ypsilanti - and it would include this most recent inter-national recognition. Congratulations to director William Boggs and to every member of this distinguished choir!

---

**LET'S NOT FORGET** to thank those who have some of the thankless jobs in our society. First of all, the **Ypsilanti Police Force** for answering all those calls that some of us have made. Yes, that's their job, but it's nice to let them know we're glad they are around when we need them. They can't solve all the problems of our complex society, but with our cooperation they can go a long way toward alleviating some of the worst headaches that plague us. **THANK YOU!**

Second, the **Building Inspectors** are another lot who come in for some fierce criticism, at times. Again, their job is not an easy one; but we have seen conditions in housing improve in the past several years, and some of the credit, surely, must go to their holding the line and following the hard rules. All of us have heard stories and some of us have told them about impossible battles with "Inspection"; but **OVERALL** let's not forget that our society could not survive very long without those rules. So, again, **THANKS**, for a thankless task.

Third, the **Historic District Commission** deserves far more credit that it receives in the local presses. The seven members of that body, selected by state law for their expertise in historic preservation, have the thankless task of reviewing every permit that passes through Building Inspection. This includes all of downtown and Depot Town and the entire historic center of this city: over 700 buildings in all. Not an easy task. Without the ordinance under which they have operated since 1978, this city would be only a shadow of its present self. Empty parking lots would have proliferated; buildings would have been altered out of recognition; and the city's historic character would have been decimated. That, we believe, could be documented with a study of the day to day work of the Commission. A thankless job, but the members of that body can take pride in the enormous contribution to the quality of life of this community. Thank you, too!



**IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH ANY OF THESE PUBLIC SERVICE BODIES, WHY NOT TAKE THAT PROBLEM TO THEM; DISCUSS IT WITH THEM, SPECIFICALLY; AND, AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, TRY TO COME TO SOME UNDERSTANDING. OFTEN IT'S SIMPLY A MATTER OF LACK OF INFORMATION BEING SHARED THAT CREATES MISUNDERSTANDINGS.**

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**THANK YOU to PAT JONES**, who has spent the past year hard at work renovating 220 N. Hamilton (corner of Emmet). She has been a real trouper and it's this kind of spirit that can see such a major project through.

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**DONNA WHITE**, too, is another trooper. She has taken on the monumental task of renovating and restoring the great Queen Ann at 160 N. Washington. Talk about "historic preservation in progress"! These are the real shakers and movers who continue to bring this town back, and they deserve all the encouragement and support we in the neighborhood and community can give them. You ARE appreciated!

---

**"THANKS AND EVER THANKS, AND OFT GOOD TURNS ARE SHUFFLED OFF WITH SUCH INCONSTANT PAY,"** (as Shakespeare says somewhere): **TO DR. JUDITH WILLISON** (Judy to those of us who work with her), in her retiring from her role as Chair of the Foundation's Refreshment committee. She will, in the next year, be deeper than ever involved in the work of the Child Development Program at EMU, now that it is again back on track, thank heavens. She has, these past several years, been a loyal, dependable, efficient mainstay of our Foundation programs, both for the four public meetings and, especially, for the May banquet. The latter has been her responsibility essentially, and she can therefore claim a portion of the credit for the good reputation the Foundation has

developed regarding its marker program over the years, since the banquet itself has become such an annual event. Thanks, Judy, for your leadership. We hope you won't desert us completely, but will continue to work with your loyal staff (Elaine Found, Shirley Durrett, Karen Nickels, et al) when time permits.

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Has anybody said even **THANKS to DEAN ROCKWELL**, that stalwart warrior, who has kept the **ONE ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE PROJECT** on course for so long? His tough persistence merited success, and success he can claim. EMU & Ypsilanti owe him thanks - for making the dream of many come true for all us. **THANKS, DEAN!**

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### **NEIGHBORHOOD'S UNITE**

**ONE GREAT EVENT** of the past year has been the formation of **CONA?** Have you heard of it? Well, if you live here, you should - and you should get involved. Ypsilanti now has a Coalition of Neighborhood Associations. You'd be surprised at the number of growing groups (block clubs, neighborhood associations, etc.) that are beginning to work together to pool their resources and understanding. **TOGETHER**, they're saying, **WE CAN DO IT!!!**

---

**HIGH SUMMER IN YPSILANTI** has been a joy this year, in contrast to dismal heat of last summer. Gardens everywhere look better than ever, and more abundant and various. But the greatest, most basic asset we have is surely **our trees**. Maple Street, for example, is one lush arch of greenery from River to Prospect. And in every part of town, there are great single trees enriching the landscape. On the **WEST SIDE**, while you are in the 100 block of Perrin, notice (how could you overlook!) the ancient oak (300 years perhaps - just guessing) on the east side of the street with a great spacious yard surrounding it. These, too, are our treasures. Let's save every one

we can - for the next generation - and beyond - to walk under.

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## **YHF SPEAKER PROGRAM BETTER THAN EVER**

This past year has been a fortunate one for the Foundation in terms of our speaker program for our four public meetings. (The May Banquet is simply that, when marker awards are given, except that we again owe **Denis Schmiedeke**, our 'in-house' architect, a word of thanks for his analysis of architectural merits of the buildings and his accompanying slides.) Our speakers this year were exceptional and we would like to thank them again, publicly, for their individual presentations:

September meeting:

**TOM DODD**, for his slide presentation: "Depot Town, Before and After: A New Look"

**THOMAS BRUNK**, Curator and Archivist of Pewabic Pottery, for his "Story of Pewabic Pottery" slide and lecture presentation

**PETER COUSINS**, Curator, Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, for his informative and amusing lecture, "Ten Nights in a Barroom"

**JAN LONGONE**, of The Wine and Food Library, Ann Arbor, for her presentation on the history of cookery

**THANKS! YOU WERE MUCH APPRECIATED!**

**THANKS to ALL WHO WATER AND SWEEP**, to keep our city beautiful!!

THANKS, especially, to Pete Murdock and Grace Sweeney for the first class renovation they have done on their home at 504 N. River: completely unpretentious but a quality transformation.

## **A MESSAGE WORTH REPEATING EVERY YEAR . . .**

There are still onions among the orchids - nobody knows that better than we do. BUT, next year, again, there will be fewer onions and more orchids! Come back and see us then!! we love having you here and your annual visit is a wonderful incentive for us to get ready for company! **SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!**

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## **FOR QUESTIONS, COMPLAINTS, COMMENTS**

If you should have any of the above to convey about this issue of the NEWS, please call **Jack Harris**, editor, 485-2155

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## **MEMBERSHIP IN THE FOUNDATION**

**REMINDER** to those interested in **RENEWING MEMBERSHIP IN THE FOUNDATION or JOINING**, September is the time to send in your dues - or pay them at the meeting. We still haven't instituted a billing system, so we are dependent upon your goodness in this respect.

## **JOIN THE FOUNDATION - HELP MAKE HISTORY!**

Individual	\$10
Family	\$15
Contributing	\$25
Sustaining	\$100
Life	\$1000

Make checks payable to Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation, and mail them to

**Betty Randazzo, Treasurer**  
6101 Hitchingham Road  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197



# Heritage News

Heritage News is the newsletter of the YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION. It is published five times a year: September, November, January, March and May; and distributed, free of charge, to the membership by mail, and made available to the public at City Hall, Farmers' Market, and various business locations in the three business districts in the City

**SEPTEMBER 1989**

**Ypsilanti, MI**

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**MEETING:** Tuesday, September 26, 1989 - 7:30 pm

**LOCATION:** The Coffee Shop, The Freight House,  
(Farmers' Market), DEPOT TOWN

**PROGRAM:** ARCHITECTURAL STYLES IN MICHIGAN

**SPEAKER:** (ON VIDEO): PROFESSOR KINGSBURY MARZOLF  
MARZOLF

School of Architecture  
University of Michigan

**FOR NEWCOMERS TO OLD HOUSES, THIS IS AN INTRODUCTION TO STYLES OF ARCHITECTURE SEEN ALL AROUND US IN YPSILANTI. FOR OTHERS, IT WILL BE AN ENTERTAINING REVIEW.**

This is about a 45 minute program, in color, shown on a full-size T-V screen. The speaker is perhaps the most popular professor of architecture at the University of Michigan and a frequent guest speaker before outside groups.

**THE PHOTOGRAPHY INCLUDES BUILDINGS IN YPSILANTI.** In fact, the first image is of the Glover Mansion (Child and Family Service), South Washington St.

**JOIN US,** for a relaxed, 45 minute program of video viewing, with discussion, questions, and - hopefully - answers to follow. (Some of the photography, by the way, was done by our own Denis Schmiedeke.)

**OUR HOSTESS** will be Karen Nickels, who will serve coffee, tea, and something to munch on.

**DON'T MISS THIS CHANCE TO MEET FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS WITH THIS COMMON INTEREST: OUR WEALTH OF ARCHITECTURE!** This is our first bi-monthly meeting of the season.



# Heritage News

Heritage News is the newsletter of the YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION. It is published five times a year: September, November, January, March and May; and distributed, free of charge, to the membership by mail, and made available to the public at City Hall, Farmers' Market, and various business locations in the three business districts in the City.

NOVEMBER 1989

Ypsilanti, MI

**MEETING:** Tuesday, November 28, 1989 - 7:30 p.m.

**LOCATION:** St. Luke's Episcopal Church  
The Meeting Room (overlooking the park)  
120 North Huron Street

**PROGRAM:** "STORIES IN STONE":  
A Presentation on Cemetery History  
(with slides and handouts)

**SPEAKER:** Rochelle Balkam, Chair, History Department,  
Ypsilanti High School, and Lecturer, History  
Department, Eastern Michigan University

This presentation traces cemetery history to its roots in England and Europe in the seventeenth century and to New England in the eighteenth century. The Victorian "rural" tradition in Highland Cemetery (Ypsilanti) and Forest Hill Cemetery (Ann Arbor), with its heavy symbolism, will be highlighted. Examples of traditional area cemeteries and other unique American and Canadian cemeteries will be included: for example, a German-American cemetery, a small Black cemetery in North Carolina, bare grave-site tradition of Key West, Florida, New England stonecutter's work in Nova Scotia, the burial vaults in New Orleans, and a military cemetery on Mackinac Island.

Ricky will also offer ideas on how to use cemeteries for genealogical research, for doing gravestone rubbings, and for using the cemetery as a teaching tool.

We are indeed fortunate to have this program at this important juncture in the funding drive for the restoration of Starkweather Chapel in Highland Cemetery.

Refreshments will be served. MEMBERSHIP NOT REQUIRED!



## THE CHRISTMAS PARTY!

Our annual holiday party for members will be on Sunday, December 10, at 7:00 p.m. If uncertain about your membership status (dues are due in September of each year), call Betty Randazzo, our treasurer, at 482-6144, or Jack Harris, who also has an up-to-date list, 485-2155.



## ORAL HISTORY TO BE OFFERED AT W.C.C.

Some of you will remember a special program that the Foundation did a year or two ago on a foggy night in March at the Willow Run Bomber Plant Museum. Our speaker that evening was Ms. Flavia Reps, Oral Historian. Now she is offering a new course for Winter term at Washtenaw Community College entitled: "Oral History/Family History: Techniques for Gathering Oral History." It will include interpreting family photographs and memorabilia, creating a family cookbook and organizing your oral interviews. Those interested should register now for Oral History Course #207, Wednesday, 6:00-8:00 p.m. (2 credits)



## LIKE CHANGE? TAKE A WALK DOWNTOWN!

Bored? Want to look at something new? Have you tried a walking tour of downtown Ypsilanti these past weeks? If not, we recommend it: you'll find lots to look at, if you're at all interested in the history of architecture (as we presume you are, or you wouldn't be reading this now).

First, there's the massive Business School rising at the the corner of W. Michigan and Hamilton. Who could miss it? Some have already complained of its ugliness (the yellow brick, the parking structure slammed up against the back and crowding Pearl St., and the huge white "cornices" that don't seem to align themselves with anything else, old or new, in the area). But one can only anticipate its opening and the change in the downtown area that will result. Let's all hope it's mostly for the better. As for architecture, can we imagine those cornices as modern-day versions of those of the nineteenth century that, for the most part, disappeared in Ypsilanti and are now being restored at some sites? And the great bays: can we associate them with the towers that so dominated the much

smaller original Cleary College of Business that stood on the same site? Think positive!

If the Business School doesn't quite take your fancy, wander down to Louis' Cafe, at 205 W. Michigan, for a look at Old Ypsilanti, both inside and out. There was the debate, you may remember, over painting the building the light refreshing colors we see there now, but it must be said that they make the DETAILS of the Old English facade - call it Tudor, if you will - stand out, especially the quaint olde lanterns, which really add a touch of fun to the street. But inside - inside is a delight! - a delight, first of all, because so much of the charm of the interior that so many of us remember, the Old English decorative features, is maintained and enhanced. England would be happy to have such a fun interior, but this is very American, done in 1926 (by a Yugoslavian artisan!) with an leaded window overhang on one side that resembles Juliet's balcony and on the other side a great "door" with huge hammered hinges - and lots more: an interior that recreates the charm of Olde England and America's love affair with that style in the 1920's. All of this painted up cheerfully, with a modern bar at the back and all looking up to snuff. Try the specials on Wednesday(Pastitsio with krema bechamel) and Friday(Mousaka) at lunchtime: Louis will probably be there, with other members of the family, friendly, and attentive to your needs.

Then don't overlook the great job that Greg Batianis, of the Wolverine, has done on his building at 223-4 W. Michigan. They saved, thank heaven, the cast iron posts that decorated the front, though a new facade partly covers them. Then at 108 you can see the finished product, including the window caps, on what is now the American Dental Group building. Note, too, the in-character facade of 1st

Optomitrists at 126 and the entire facade restoration project in progress at 124, belonging to newcomer Tom Stachler, who is negotiating to buy the Old Opera House building, as well.

If that's not enough for you, wander around to Pearl and feel good about what the Maxtons are doing with the old G.A.R. Hall at 110 and its sister building. Who could have hoped for a better future for these structures?

Then wander around back, and watch the action at the new CMHC's Maab Health Center.

Back on Pearl, you may want to contemplate what's about to happen to the Centennial Center (the old Huron Hotel), where a massive renovation is about to begin, including reopening of the restaurant; and you can imagine the new AATA bus terminal that is to be built between Washington and Adams. Change is in the air - and faster than we could have dreamed eight or ten years ago. Linda Young, Manager of the Mainstreet Program, tells us that the new focus downtown will be on increasing residential use of second and third story spaces and well as on improving the image by using more tools to reduce the negatives such as trash, dirt, and other issues.



#### RANDAZZO QUOTED AGAIN!

Michigan Living, AAA's monthly magazine, has quoted Don Randazzo again in their November issue - and, why not? - since who should know better about the subject of "Restoring Homes is a Labor of Love." Not only is Don a restoration carpenter at Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, but he has restored, renovated, and enlarged his own home on Hitchingham as a "labor of love." Incidentally, Materials Unlimited is also mentioned in the article

as a good source for antique accessories and reproductions.



#### PAINTIN' UP THE TOWN!!!

You'd have to be sound asleep not to have noticed that Ypsilanti is seeing more paint jobs lately than you can keep track of. First, of course, you must notice the quiet elegance of the great Italianate house at 112 Washtenaw, home of Al Heezen and Wanda McGlasson.

But if you want a real color shock treatment - and an historically authentic color scheme all at once, head up to 301 W. Grove, home of Board Member Hank Prebys and Joe Mattimoe, where a four-color scheme right out of the 1880's Devoe Paint Co catalogue hits you head on with colors hard to describe and new to all post Victorian eyes - which means most of us. The house is one of our few fine Gothic structures, and it may be argued that in literature and art, at least, Gothic always meant daring, romantic, wild, so it seems a perfect setting to try SOMETHING other than the ever-so-popular-now earth tones, also recommended in the nineteenth century - but earlier, by Andrew Jackson Downing (1850). Go, and gaze!

Then a good look at 119 W. Huron (what one critic called the Chicago house because of its resemblance to so many old houses in that city), is a treat now, since the ornate metal cornice has been repaired and painted and the exterior looking, perhaps, its best ever.

There are TONS more facade improvements to enjoy. These are only a few - a starter for anyone who wants to walk or drive through our historic city (and there's much more to be done, we know!).



**SHERZER UPDATE**

After the devastating fire that left Sherzer in ruins last winter, we now can report that the construction company handling the project is done with demolition; they have washed the building and repointed the brick. Work continues and cost rise (the original estimate was 3.5 million, now risen to 5.3 million), but it will be a thrill to see the new roof emerge, the new observatory set in place, and the entire building take on new life. This may be likened, in its own small way, to England's loss of the great historic house called Uppark this year to fire. The National Trust, which owns the building, has decided that it will have to be rebuilt - at unbelievable expense. The fire started, incidentally, in the roof, which was one day short of a 2-year repair job. Although the building was left completely in ruins, a lot of the eighteenth century furnishings were saved, simply because the staff moved them outside onto the front lawn - as the building burned. (Like Sherzer, the firefighters were hampered in their work by poor water connections.)

**JOIN THE YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION!**  
Support awareness of our historic architectural heritage!

Dues are due in September. Please check your records and note when you last paid. Single membership is still \$10; Family membership \$15; and Senior and Student membership only \$3. Support YHF and you will be contributing to the promotion and awareness of Ypsilanti second best resource (its people, of course, are its first!): architecture. Send your dues to Ypsilanti Heritage Foundation, Betty Randazzo, Treasurer, 6101 Hitchingham, Ypsilanti, 48197. DO IT TODAY!




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YPSILANTI HERITAGE FOUNDATION

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510 PEARL

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YPSILANTI, MICHIGAN 48197

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**HOLIDAY SEASON 1989**

**YPSILANTI, MI**

## **LET'S HAVE A PARTY!**

You are cordially invited to the Annual Ypsilanti  
Heritage Foundation Christmas Party

This year the party will be held at the home of Cliff Larkins and Jack Harris, 510 Pearl Street, Ypsilanti. The date is Sunday, December 10. The time - 7:00 - 9:00.

Punch and Hot Cider will be served.

## **PLEASE BRING A PLATE OF GOODIES TO PASS!**

It's the same old house: small rooms, floors creaking, clutter everywhere; but all the lamps will be lit, a tiny fire in the front hall fireplace, the goodies will be scattered on tables about the rooms - and people can move about at their own free will, imbibing what they will, and eating what they dare.

Two rooms have been "done" since our last party: the little off-limits junk room upstairs (always filled to brimming; now clutter free, and a joy of morning sun; and the former "Colonial Room" next to the kitchen (it was never Colonial, you will remember), now the Garden Breakfast Room, where we've put the wicker, without the garden, and where we have dinner, not breakfast. The notorious Red Room still retains its character - and reputation.

**DO COME, FOR THE FUN, THE MUSIC, AND THE CONVERSATION!**

R.S.V.P. (only if in the affirmative, 485-2155)

